

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 13-14 and claims 27-29 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 15 and 30 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

EXAMINER'S INTERVIEW

An interview was conducted between the Examiner and the Applicants' representative E. Huang on January 14, 2009. Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicants during said interview.

REJECTIONS BASED ON 35 U.S.C. § 101

The Examiner rejected claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 for allegedly failing to recite a statutory process to which it is tied. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the following arguments and amendments. Although Applicants disagree with this characterization, nevertheless, independent claim 1 has been amended to recite the limitation of "A method of synthesizing speech in a computer synthesized speech interface by using discourse function level prosodic features", thereby tying it to a computer synthesized speech interface. Support for this limitation can be found, for example, at paragraph [0002] of the specification. Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claim 1 is statutory.

As for the rejection on claim 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 101, Applicants have canceled the claim, rendering the rejection moot.

REJECTIONS BASED ON 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over "Can Prosody Aid the Automatic Classification of Dialog Acts in Conversational Speech?" (hereinafter Shriberg) in view of Marcu et al. (US 20020046018 A1,

hereinafter Marcu) and further in view of Lee et al. (6,088,673 hereinafter Lee). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the following arguments and amendments.

Claims 13-14 and claims 27-29 have been canceled, rendering the rejections on those claims moot.

Claim 1, as amended, recites the new limitation of “determining a theory of discourse analysis from a plurality of theories of discourse analysis, wherein the determining a theory of discourse analysis is based on either a desired type of speech to be synthesized, or by user selection;” Similar limitations were incorporated into independent claims 15 and 30. Support for this limitation can be found at, for example, Figure 2 and paragraph [0021] of the specification. Applicants respectfully submit that neither Shriberg, nor Marcu, nor Lee, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest the limitation of “wherein the determining a theory of discourse analysis is based on either a desired type of speech to be synthesized, or by user selection” as recited by independent claims 1 and similarly recited in independent claims 15 and 30.

In more detail, the Examiner conceded in the office action that Shriberg failed to teach the limitation of determining a theory of discourse analysis from a plurality of theories of discourse analysis, and cited Marcu in an attempt to rectify that deficiency. However, as discussed in the interview, the discourse structure that Marcu utilizes is basically a set of parsing rules that depends on the input (a clause, sentence, paragraph, etc.) The purpose of Marcu was to summarize the input; however, this is unrelated to speech synthesis. In contrast, the present invention is towards synthesizing speech using discourse analysis. In order to achieve that goal, a suitable theory of discourse analysis must be chosen to properly synthesize speech correctly. Thus, as described in Figure 2 and paragraph [0021] of the specification, the theory of discourse

analysis may be determined based on the type of speech to be synthesized or by user selection.

If a particular type of speech is desired, then a theory of discourse analysis is chosen to achieve that goal. Marcu does not teach anywhere a theory of discourse analysis being chosen in such a manner because Marcu merely cares about the formatting of the input and then summarizing the input based on the format.

The remaining reference, Lee, teaches synchronizing speech to a facial image, and is cited for the alleged teachings of other limitations. Therefore, Lee will not overcome the deficiency created by Shriberg and Marcu.

Therefore, without admitting that the cited references teach or suggest any of the other limitations of the pending claims, Applicants respectfully submit that none of the Shriberg, Marcu and Lee, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest the limitation of “wherein the determining a theory of discourse analysis is based on either a desired type of speech to be synthesized, or by user selection” as recited in independent claim 1 and as generally recited in independent claims 15 and 30. For this reason, the cited prior art fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations of the claims, and claims 1, 15 and 30 are therefore not rendered unpatentable over Shriberg, Marcu and Lee.

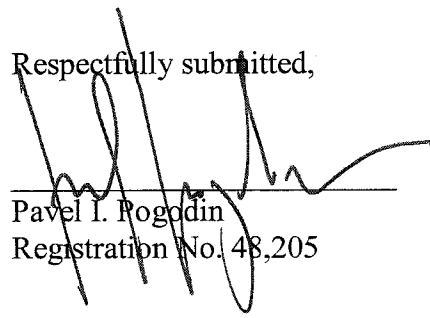
With respect to the rejection of the remaining dependent claims, while continuing to traverse the Examiner’s characterization of the teachings of the references used by the Examiner in rejecting those claims, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are patentable by definition by virtue of their dependence upon their respective patentable independent claims 1 and 15. In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendment of the parent base claims render the rejections of the dependent claims moot.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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